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Abraham Lincoln

His Life

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
HIS LIFE

By
M. A. GOLDSMITH

A TRUE STORY
of ONE *of the* WORLD'S
BEST MEN

THE GOLDSMITH PUBLISHING CO.
Cleveland, Ohio

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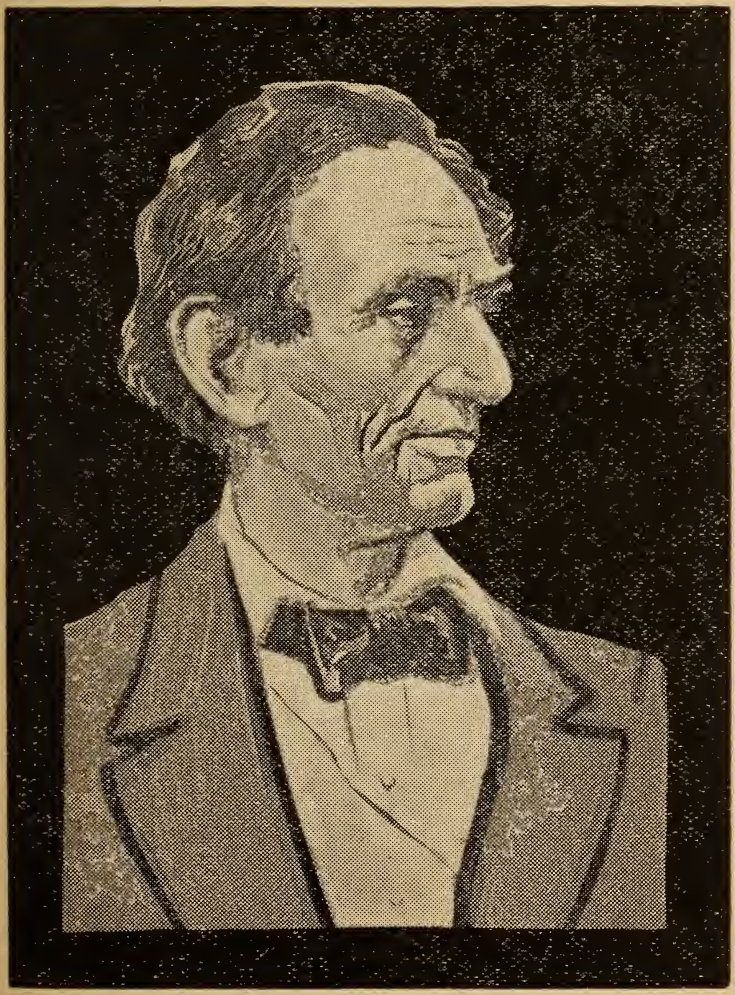

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
From portrait by L. Buttner in possession of
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From sturdy stock, yet lowly station,
Arose the man, whom all the nation
Revered and honored.

THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

His Parents

Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of the United States, first saw the light of day in a log cabin in the woods of Kentucky. Little did his parents realize that the tiny child who came to them on the twelfth day of February, 1809, would become the idol of the American people—a man than whom there was none nobler.

His father, Thomas Lincoln, was an easy-going backwoodsman, sturdy in build, a carpenter by trade.

His mother was refined and well educated. Her maiden name was Nancy Hanks, and at the time of her marriage (she was then twenty-three years old) was known for her rare beauty and religious devotion.

1809

On Nolin Creek was born to fame
A sturdy child, his deeds, his name,
Are known in every land.

His Birthplace

On the south bank of Nolin Creek, three miles from what is now Hodgenville, Kentucky, was a little log cabin. About it stretched barren grass and straggly bushes. The land was slightly rolling with scarcely any foliage to break the monotony.

All about was desolate. Just why anyone would select this as a home site is hard to understand. The soil was so "poor" that only with the hardest labor could it be made sufficiently productive to repay the labor of sowing.

Here came Thomas and Nancy Lincoln and here on February 12, 1809, was born a son, Abraham Lincoln.

1813

The woods, the trees, the creek-land,
With flowers and birds—his dreamland—
There early youth was spent.

His Early Youth

When Abraham was four years old, the Lincolns moved to a place on Knob Creek, six miles from Hodgenville.

Their plot of land was larger and more fertile than that on Nolin Creek. Of the two hundred and thirty-eight acres that comprised the new site, Thomas Lincoln cultivated six acres.

The family's wants were few—their meals were frugal and until Abe was seven years old, he led a happy-go-lucky existence. Helping in the fields, strolling through the woods, learning the beauties of nature at nature's threshold.

His early education was such as was gleaned from irregular sessions at the "country school house."

1818

Left motherless at age of nine;
A roving life, hard work were thine,
Yet strong in morals.

His Youth

In the spring of 1816, the family moved to Pigeon Creek, Spencer County, Indiana, where the father built a log cabin.

Two years later Abraham's mother died. A year later his father married again. Abe's new mother soon grew very fond of him and at her insistence his father allowed him to attend school during the winter of 1819. The next winter, too, he spent a few weeks at school.

Most of his early education was obtained at home at night. Here, stretched upon the floor with a book before him, Abraham lay before the fireplace night after night. His favorite books were the Bible, Aesop's Fables and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

During the day he helped his father about the farm, tilling the soil, splitting rails, trapping and hunting.

1819 to 1825

And now come years of earnest toil
To guide the boats—to till the soil—
To work at many trades.

His Early Manhood

The boy grew rapidly. At the age of seventeen he stood six feet and four inches in height. He devoted much of his time to reading, making speeches and in a limited way to writing on the political questions of the day.

At the age of nineteen, Lincoln, then employed by James Gentry, made his first voyage down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. The trip was made in a flat boat filled with produce. This was sold at New Orleans.

In 1825 Abraham entered the employ of James Taylor at Anderson's Creek. He was farm hand, ferryman and Jack of all trades.

Lincoln had rapidly grown to be a young man of powerful physique.

1831

A country merchant in a country store
And thus inscribed above the door:—
"Lincoln & Berry."

Business Ventures

In March, 1830, the family moved to Mason County, Illinois, five miles southwest of Decatur.

Lincoln was now twenty-one years old and upon him fell the task of building the new home.

He left the Lincoln family to "strike out for himself." In 1831, together with two companions, he built a boat, loaded it with pork, hogs and corn. This was floated down the Mississippi to New Orleans where it was sold. A short time later Lincoln and a fellow named Berry, under the firm name of Lincoln and Berry, bought out a general store at New Salem. The business was unprofitable and when it was discontinued Lincoln was left with a burden of debts.

1837

Now mark his entrance to the bar,
A rising lawyer with a guiding star
Of noble deeds to do.

Soldier, Postmaster, Legislator

In 1831 the Black Hawk War broke out. The following year Lincoln enlisted in a company recruited at Sangamon, Illinois, and was elected Captain. He obtained excellent military training although his company did not see much of the war.

At the close of the war, Lincoln was appointed postmaster at New Salem. His next vocation was that of surveyor.

In 1833 Lincoln made his first political speech and in 1834 was elected to the Legislature. Here he met Stephen A. Douglas of whom we shall hear later.

Re-elected to office, he served continuously for eight years. In 1837 he made his famous "Lightning Rod" speech. The same year Lincoln left New Salem and was entered at the bar, "a full fledged lawyer," at Springfield, Illinois.

1837 to 1846

His fund of stories served him well
And woe to him on whom befell
The shafts of Lincoln's satire.

Lawyer

In 1837, Lincoln entered into a partnership with John T. Stuart of Springfield, and in 1841 the partnership was dissolved, when Lincoln became associated with Stephen T. Logan.

In 1845 a new firm was formed, Lincoln and Herndon, which continued until Lincoln's death. During his many years of active legal service Abraham Lincoln was known for honesty of purpose, his high ideals of integrity and for his conscientious principles.

In his discourses his logic was clear and his argument forcible. His homely wit and great fund of stories won many a case for him.

1846 to 1858

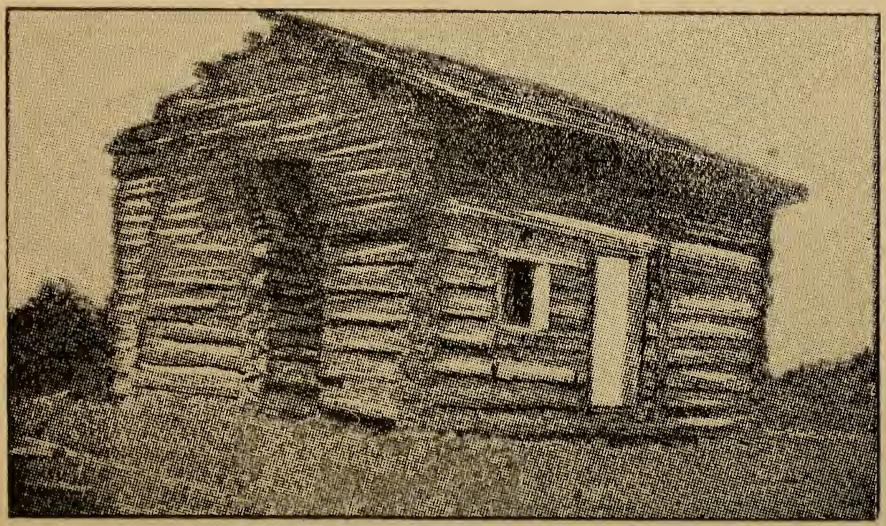
Emancipation was his thought
But no results his efforts brought,
The time was not yet ripe.

Congressman

In 1846 Lincoln was elected to Congress by the Whigs—the only candidate elected by that party in Illinois. He was appointed member of the Committee of Post Offices and Post Roads.

On January 12, 1848, he made a powerful appeal against the declaration of war with Mexico. He introduced a bill into the house to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. This met such violent opposition that it was never brought to vote. On March 4, 1849, his term as Congressman expired.

Nine years later, on June 16, 1858, Lincoln was nominated as the Republican candidate for Senator of Illinois. Opposing him as candidate for the Democratic party was Stephen A. Douglas.



BIRTHPLACE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

His Family

On November 4, 1842, Abraham Lincoln was married to Miss Mary Todd. She was a charming young woman of twenty-five—a Kentuckian by birth, animated, well read, an exceptionally clever conversationalist.

The match was an excellent one. Lincoln made a loyal and indulgent husband. Mrs. Lincoln was an excellent housewife—a true helpmate to a great man.

They had four sons. Only one, Robert Todd Lincoln, grew to manhood. He was Secretary of War during the Garfield and Arthur administrations, and from 1889 to 1893 was Minister to England.

1860

A man of superhuman trait
To guide the tottering Ship of State
The nation well chose Lincoln.

President

Lincoln challenged Douglas to a joint debate and seven meetings were decided upon. Although the campaign was a losing one for Lincoln, the favorable sentiment created by his anti-slavery argument helped elect him to Presidency.

On May 16, 1860, he was nominated as the Republican candidate for Presidency.

The Democratic party split into three divisions, nominating as many candidates, Douglas, Breckinridge and Bell.

On November 6, 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States. The vote stood as follows:

Lincoln 1,857,610. Douglas 1,291,254.

Breckinridge 850,022. Bell 646,124.

1861

He showed his depth of wisdom, when
He gathered 'round him those great men
Who formed his cabinet.

His Cabinet

At the inaugural exercises, March 4, 1861, one of the first to offer his congratulations and to pledge his support to Lincoln was his erstwhile opponent, Douglas.

Lincoln's cabinet consisted of Wm. H. Seward, Secretary of State; Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury; Simon Cameron, Secretary of War; Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy; Caleb B. Smith, Secretary of the Interior; Edward Bates, Attorney-General; Montgomery Blair, Postmaster-General.

In January, 1862, Cameron withdrew and in his place Edwin M. Stanton, a Democrat, was appointed. Although of different political convictions, he served his chief loyally until the end.

1861

The Southern States were up in arms,
The country seethed in war alarms
When Lincoln entered office.

Secession

When Lincoln came into office he found a disordered government. Six Southern states had seceded and elected Jefferson Davis President. They had taken possession of the United States Treasury at New Orleans, robbing the government of five hundred thousand dollars. Major Anderson had been bottled up at Fort Sumter and a vessel sent to his aid had been fired on by the rebels.

Sedition was rife everywhere. The Southern States had armed troops with guns taken from the government during Buchanan's administration.

On April 14, 1861, Fort Sumter was captured by the Confederates and on the next day President Lincoln called for the enlistment of seventy-five thousand volunteers to defend Washington.

1861

War! Its horrors and its strife
Bade fair to sap the very life
Of our great nation.

War

War! The nation was to know the horrors of armed conflict.

The tramp of armed thousands was heard over the land. Rioting and treachery were rife. The Sixth Massachusetts regiment was mobbed while passing through Baltimore and a large number killed. Troops rushed to Washington.

Thirty thousand men were gathered under the command of General McDowell and on July 21st the battle of Bull Run was fought. It was a terrible defeat for the Union forces. During the eventful years that followed—years when the very life of the nation was threatened, when defeat was followed by defeat and the North was in a state of varying mutiny and in fear of invasion, through all these stern times Lincoln was calm and self-possessed.

1862

"All persons held as slaves are free,"
Thus read that wonderful decree
That gave emancipation.

Emancipation Proclamation

The cares that fell upon his shoulders would have overcome any but the strongest of wills. Newspaper censure, dissension in the army, the building of the Merrimac and its victories over the Union vessels, all combined to create a spirit of panic.

Then the Monitor was built and its glorious fight became one of the bright spots in the history of that awful war.

On July 22, 1862, Lincoln presented his Emancipation Proclamation to the senate, and on January 1, 1863, it was returned to him for signature. This document, one of the most wonderful of its kind, was to free all slaves. It was one of the greatest factors in the advance of modern civilization.

1864

Peace spread her wings and all discord
Was silenced. O'er the nation poured
An eon of tranquillity.

Peace

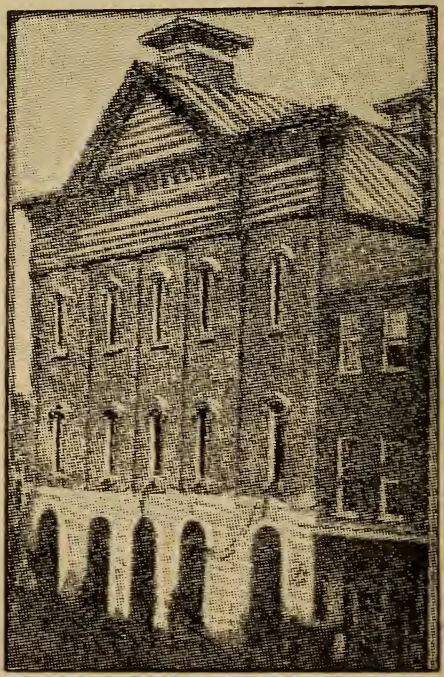
The Republican National Convention unanimously nominated Lincoln for his second term on June 7, 1864. McClellan was nominated by the Democrats.

Lincoln was elected by an overwhelming majority.

The war was rapidly approaching termination. The Southern ports were closely blockaded and on the ninth of April General Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House.

Peace at last spread her wings over the land.

Now came the problem of reconstruction. No man was more capable of handling this difficult problem than was Lincoln, and had he lived, the chaotic condition that existed in the South might have been quickly remedied.



FORD'S THEATRE, WASHINGTON, D. C.,
IN WHICH LINCOLN WAS SHOT

Death

On the evening of April 14, the President, accompanied by his family, attended a performance at Ford's Theatre. Seated in an upper box, enjoying the humor of the play, he little knew of the danger that was lurking nearby.

John Wilkes Booth, a famous actor, had quietly crept into the box, pistol in one hand and a dagger in the other. Suddenly a report rang out. And one of the noblest men that ever lived was lain low.

Abraham Lincoln was carried to a house across the street, surgeons were summoned, but to no avail. At dawn, April 15, his soul passed to the great beyond.

His words, his deeds, the good he wrought,
Will live forever in the thought
Of all eternity.

In Memoriam

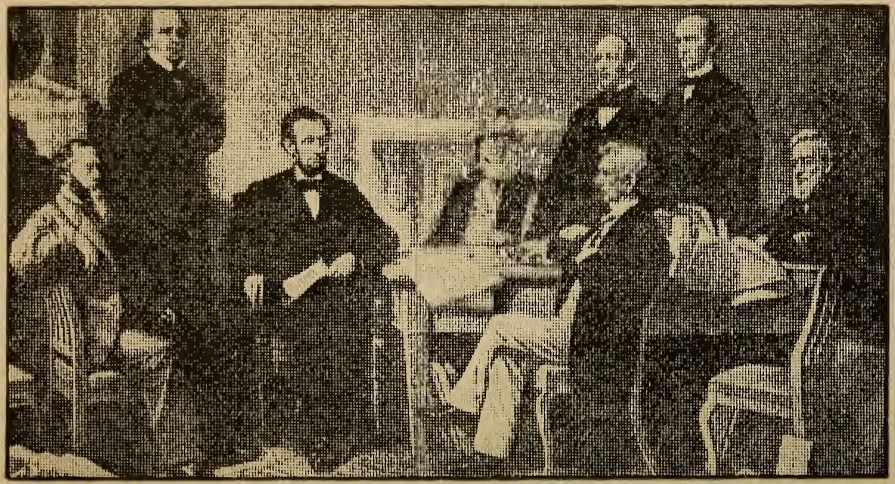
Sorrow swept through the land. North and South alike mourned the loss that was theirs.

The funeral service was held in the East Room of the White House.

Lincoln was buried in Springfield, Ill.

We of this later day who read of the lofty aims, the noble thoughts, the unselfish purposes of Abraham Lincoln can let his life inscribe in our thoughts those words of Longfellow:

"Lives of great men, all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."



LINCOLN READING THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION TO HIS CABINET

Noble Thoughts and Extracts from the Speeches and Letters of Abraham Lincoln

"Half finished work generally proves to be labor lost."

From an Appeal for the Improvement of the Sangamon River

Delivered in State Legislature March 1, 1832.

"Time and experience have verified to a demonstration the public utility of internal improvements. That the poorest and most thinly populated countries would be greatly benefited by the opening of good roads, and in the clearing of navigable streams within their limits, is what no person will deny. Yet it is folly to undertake works of this or any other kind without first knowing that we are able to finish them—as half-finished work generally proves to be labor lost. There cannot justly be any objection to having railroads and canals, any more than to other good things, provided they cost nothing. The only objection is to paying for them; and the objection arises from the want of ability to pay."

"I go for admitting all . . . to the right of suffrage."

Favoring Equal Suffrage

From a Letter Written to the Editor of the "New Salem Journal," June 13, 1836.

"I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently, I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females).

If elected, I shall consider the whole people of Sangamon my constituents, as well those that oppose as those that support me.

While acting as their representative, I shall be governed by their will on all subjects upon which I have the means of knowing what their will is; and upon all others I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will best advance their interests."

"The victory shall be complete when there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard."

From an Address on Temperance

Delivered Before the Washington Society at Springfield, Ill., February 22, 1842.

"And what a noble ally this to the cause of political freedom; with such an aid its march cannot fail to be on and on, till every son of earth shall drink in rich fruition the sorrow-quenching draughts of perfect liberty. Happy day when—all appetites controlled, all poisons subdued, all matter subjected—mind, all-conquering mind, shall live and move, the monarch of the world. Glorious consummation! Hail, fall of fury! Reign of reason, all hail!

And when the victory shall be complete—when there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard on the earth—how proud the title of that land which may truly claim to be the birthplace and the cradle of both those revolutions that shall have ended in that victory. How nobly distinguished that people who shall have planted and nurtured to maturity both the political and moral freedom of their species."

"To secure to each laborer the whole product of his labor, or as nearly as possible, is a worthy object of any good government."

Protective Tariff

From Notes Written About December 1, 1847.

"In the early days of our race the Almighty said to the first of our race, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread;" and since then, if we except the light and the air of heaven, no good thing has been or can be enjoyed by us without having first cost labor. And inasmuch as most good things are produced by labor, it follows that all such things of right belong to those whose labor has produced them. But it has so happened, in all ages of the world, that some have labored, and others have without labor enjoyed a large proportion of the fruits. This is wrong, and should not continue. To secure to each laborer the whole product of his labor, or as nearly as possible, is a worthy object of any good government."

"He desired the prosperity of his countrymen . . . to show to the world that free men could be prosperous."

Eulogy of Henry Clay

Delivered July 16, 1852, in the State House at Springfield, Illinois.

"Mr. Clay's predominant sentiment, from first to last, was a deep devotion to the cause of human liberty—a strong sympathy with the oppressed everywhere, and an ardent wish for their elevation. With him this was a primary and all-controlling passion. Subsidiary to this was the conduct of his whole life. He loved his country partly because it was his own country, and mostly because it was a free country; and he burned with a zeal for its advancement, prosperity, and glory, because he saw in such the advancement, prosperity, and glory of human liberty, human right, and human nature. He desired the prosperity of his countrymen, partly because they were his countrymen, but chiefly to show to the world that free men could be prosperous."

"We proposed to give all a chance; and we expected the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant wiser, and all better and happier together."

On Equal Rights of Men

From Notes Jotted Down About July, 1854.

"So plain that no one, high or low, ever does mistake it, except in a plainly selfish way; for although volume upon volume is written to prove slavery a very good thing, we never hear of the man who wishes to take the good of it by being a slave himself.

"Most governments have been based, practically, on the denial of the equal rights of men, as I have, in part, stated them; ours began by affirming those rights. They said, some men are too ignorant and vicious to share in government. Possibly so, said we; and, by your system, you would always keep them ignorant and vicious. We proposed to give all a chance; and we expected the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant wiser, and all better and happier together."

"Let us revere the Declaration of Independence . . . let us keep step to the music of the Union."

The Famous "Lost Speech"

Delivered May 29, 1856, at the Republican State Convention at Bloomington.

(So called because the entire audience became so interested that even the reporters failed to take notes.)

"The Union is undergoing a fearful strain; but it is a stout old ship, and has weathered many a hard blow, and the "stars in their courses," aye, an invisible power, greater than the puny efforts of men, will fight for us. But we ourselves must not decline the burden of responsibility, nor take counsel of unworthy passions. Whatever duty urges us to do or to omit, must be done or omitted; and the recklessness with which our adversaries break the laws, or counsel their violation, should afford no example for us. Therefore, let us revere the Declaration of Independence; let us continue to obey the Constitution and the laws; let us keep step to the music of the Union. Let us draw a cordon, so to speak, around the slave states and the hateful institution, like a reptile poisoning itself, will perish by its own infamy."

"The human heart is with us; God is with us."

On Equality of Men

From Speech Delivered in Chicago, December 10, 1856.

"Can we not come together for the future? Let every one who really believes, and is resolved, that free society is not and shall not be a failure, and who can conscientiously declare that in the past contest he has done only what he thought best—let every such one have charity to believe that every other one can say as much. Thus let bygones be bygones; let past differences as nothing be; and with steady eye on the real issue, let us reinaugurate the good old 'central ideas' of the republic. We can do it. The human heart is with us; God is with us. We shall again be able not to declare that 'all States as States are equal,' nor yet that 'all citizens as citizens are equal,' but to renew the broader, better declaration, including both these and much more, that 'all men are created equal.'"

"A house divided against itself cannot stand."

Accepting the Nomination as United States Senator

Springfield, Ill., June 16, 1858.

"In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South."

"The Declaration . . . will link those patriotic hearts as long as the love of freedom exists."

Equal Freedom

From Speech at Chicago, Ill., July 10, 1858.

"If they look back through this history to trace their connection with those days by blood, they find they have none; they cannot carry themselves back into that glorious epoch and make themselves feel that they are part of us; but when they look through that old Declaration of Independence, they find that those old men say that 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,' and then they feel that that moral sentiment taught in that day evidences their relation to those men, that it is the father of all moral principle in them, and that they have a right to claim it as though they were blood of the blood, and flesh of the flesh, of the men who wrote that Declaration, and so they are. That is the electric cord in that Declaration that links the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving men together, that will link those patriotic hearts as long as the love of freedom exists in the minds of men throughout the world."

"Without the assistance of that Divine Being . . . I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail."

On Leaving Home

From Farewell Speech to Springfield Neighbors When Leaving for Washington to Take Up the Presidency, February 11, 1861.

"My Friends: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

"I am in favor of cutting up the wild lands into parcels, so that every poor man can have a home."

On Immigration

From Speech Delivered at Cincinnati, February 12, 1861.

"Mr. Chairman, I hold that while man exists it is his duty to improve not only his own condition, but to assist in ameliorating mankind; and therefore, without entering upon the details of the question, I will simply say that I am for those means which will give the greatest good to the greatest number.

In regard to the homestead law, I have to say that in so far as the government lands can be disposed of, I am in favor of cutting up the wild lands into parcels, so that every poor man may have a home.

Inasmuch as our country is extensive and new, and the countries of Europe are densely populated, if there are any abroad who desire to make this the land of their adoption, it is not in my heart to throw aught in their way to prevent them from coming to the United States."

"The Union, the Constitution and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated."

The Liberty of Our Forefathers

From Address at Trenton, N. J.,
February 21, 1861.

"I am exceedingly anxious that that thing—that something even more than national independence; that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time to come—I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made, and I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be a humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of this, his almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle."

"The Declaration of Independence . . . gave promise that all should have an equal chance."

From Address Delivered in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, February 22, 1861

"I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle from which sprang the institutions under which we live.

"I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world, for all future time. It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights would be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved on that basis?"

"We shall number . . . five hundred millions of happy and prosperous people."

On the Admittance of Kansas to the Union

Address on Raising the New Flag Over Independence Hall, Philadelphia, February 22, 1861.

"Cultivating the spirit that animated our fathers, who gave renown and celebrity to this hall, cherishing that fraternal feeling which has so long characterized us as a nation, excluding passion, ill temper, and precipitate action on all occasions, I think we may promise ourselves that not only the new star placed upon that flag shall be permitted to remain there to our permanent prosperity for years to come, but additional ones shall from time to time be placed there until we shall number, as it was anticipated by the great historian, five hundred millions of happy and prosperous people."

"The mystic chords of memory . . . will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched by the better angels of our nature."

From Inaugural Address

Washington, D. C., March 4, 1861.

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect and defend it.'

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by better angels of our nature."

"Ballots are the rightful and peaceful successors of bullets."

From Message to Congress, July 4, 1861

"Our popular government has often been called an experiment. Two points in it our people have already settled—the successful establishing and the successful administering of it. One still remains—its successful maintenance against a formidable internal attempt to overthrow it. It is now for them to demonstrate to the world that those who can fairly carry an election can also suppress a rebellion; that ballots are the rightful and peaceful successors of bullets; and that when ballots have fairly and constitutionally decided, there can be no successful appeal back to bullets; that there can be no successful appeal, except to ballots themselves, at succeeding elections. Such will be a great lesson of peace; teaching men that what they cannot take by an election, neither can they take it by war; teaching all the folly of being the beginners of a war."

"It is peculiarly fit for us . . . to humble ourselves before him and to pray for his mercy."

From Thanksgiving Proclamation August 12, 1861

"And whereas when our own beloved country once, by the blessing of God, united, prosperous, and happy, is now afflicted with faction and civil war, it is peculiarly fit for us to recognize the hand of God in this terrible visitation and in sorrowful remembrance of our own faults and crimes as a nation and as individuals, to humble ourselves before him and to pray for his mercy—to pray that we may be spared further punishment, though most justly deserved; that our arms may be blessed and made effectual for the re-establishment of law, order, and peace throughout the wide extent of our country; and that the inestimable boon of civil and religious liberty, earned under his guidance and blessing by the labors and sufferings of our fathers, may be restored in all its original excellence."

"Statute laws should be made as plain and intelligible as possible."

From Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1861

"It seems to me very important that the statute laws should be made as plain and intelligible as possible, and be reduced to as small a compass as may consist with the fulness and precision of the will of the legislature and perspicuity of its language. This, well done, would, I think, greatly facilitate the labors of those whose duty it is to assist in the administration of the laws, and would be a lasting benefit to the people by placing before them, in a more accessible and intelligible form, the laws which so deeply concern their interests and their duties.

Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration."

"Implore spiritual consolation in behalf of all who have been brought into affliction."

From Proclamation of Thanksgiving for Victories, April 10, 1862

"It is therefore recommended to the people of the United States that, at their next weekly assemblages in their accustomed places of public worship which shall occur after notice of this proclamation shall have been received, they especially acknowledge and render thanks to our Heavenly Father for these inestimable blessings; that they then and there implore spiritual consolation in behalf of all who have been brought into affliction by the casualities and calamities of sedition and civil war; and that they reverently invoke the divine guidance for our national counsels, to the end that they may speedily result in the restoration of peace, harmony, and unity throughout our borders, and hasten the establishment of fraternal relations among all the countries of the earth."

"That portion of the earth's surface which is . . . inhabited by the people of the United States is well adapted to be the home of one national family."

From Annual Message Delivered Before Congress December 1, 1862

"A nation may be said to consist of its territory, its people, and its laws. The territory is the only part which is of certain durability. 'One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth forever.' It is of the first importance to duly consider and estimate this ever-enduring part. That portion of the earth's surface which is owned and inhabited by the people of the United States is well adapted to be the home of one national family, and it is not well adapted for two or more. Its vast extent and its variety of climate and productions are of advantage in this age for one people, whatever they might have been in former ages. Steam, telegraphs, and intelligence have brought these to be an advantageous combination for one united people."

"All persons held as slaves . . . shall be free."

Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom."

"Accept my best wishes for the welfare and happiness of the whole British people."

From Letter to Workingmen of England, February 2, 1863

"The resources, advantages, and powers of the American people are very great, and they have consequently succeeded to equally great responsibilities. It seems to have devolved upon them to test whether a government established on the principles of human freedom can be maintained against an effort to build one upon the exclusive foundation of human bondage. They will rejoice with me in the new evidences which your proceedings furnish that the magnanimity they are exhibiting is justly estimated by the true friends of freedom and humanity in foreign countries.

"Accept my best wishes for your individual welfare, and for the welfare and happiness of the whole British people."

"Let us then rest humbly in the hope . . . that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high."

From Proclamation for a National Day of Fasting, March 30, 1863

"Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views, of the Senate, I do by this, my proclamation, designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting and prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord, and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion. All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings, that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high, and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins, and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace."

"It is meet and right to recognize . . . the power of his hand equally in these triumphs and in these sorrows."

From Proclamation for Thanksgiving, July 15, 1863

"It has pleased Almighty God to hearken to the supplications and prayers of an afflicted people, and to vouchsafe to the army and navy of the United States victories on land and on the sea so signal and so effective as to furnish reasonable grounds for augmented confidence that the union of these States will be maintained, their Constitution preserved, and their peace and prosperity permanently restored. But these victories have been accorded not without sacrifices of life, limb, health, and liberty, incurred by brave, loyal, and patriotic citizens. Domestic affliction in every part of the country follows in the train of these fearful bereavements. It is meet and right to recognize and confess the presence of the Almighty Father, and the power of his hand equally in these triumphs and in these sorrows."

"The government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

At the Dedication of Gettysburg Cemetery

From Speech Delivered November 19, 1863.

"The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

"Honor to him who braves, for the common good, the storms of heaven and the storms of battle."

From Letter to Cooper Institute, December 2, 1863

"Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere who bravely bears his country's cause. Honor also to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field, and serves, as he best can, the same cause—honor to him, only less than to him who braves, for the common good, the storms of heaven and the storms of battle."

"To the army and navy . . . the world must stand indebted for the home of freedom disenthralled . . . and perpetuated."

From Annual Message Delivered Before Congress, December 8, 1863

"In the midst of other cares, however important, we must not lose sight of the fact that the war power is still our main reliance. To that power alone can we look, yet for a time, to give confidence to the people in the contested regions that the insurgent power will not again overrun them. Until that confidence shall be established, little can be done anywhere for what is called reconstruction. Hence our chiefest care must still be directed to the army and navy, who have thus far borne their harder part so nobly and well. And it may be esteemed fortunate that in giving the greatest efficiency to these indispensable arms, we do also honorably recognize the gallant men, from commander to sentinel, who compose them, and to whom, more than to others, the world must stand indebted for the home of freedom disenthralled, regenerated, enlarged, and perpetuated."

"A full pardon . . . with restoration of all rights."

From Proclamation of Amnesty, December 8, 1863

"I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do proclaim, declare, and make known to all persons who have, directly or by implication, participated in the existing rebellion, except as hereinafter excepted, that a full pardon is hereby granted to them and each of them, with restoration of all rights of property, except as to slaves, and in property cases where rights of third parties shall have intervened, and upon the condition that every such person shall take and subscribe an oath, and thenceforward keep and maintain said oath inviolate; and which oath shall be registered for permanent preservation, and shall be of the tenor and effect following, to-wit:"

"They have demonstrated in blood their right to the ballot."

From Letter to General Wadsworth, February, 1864

"How to better the condition of the colored race has long been a study which has attracted my serious and careful attention; hence I think I am clear and decided as to what course I shall pursue in the premises, regarding it as a religious duty, as the nation's guardian of these people who have so heroically vindicated their manhood on the battle-field, where, in assisting to save the life of the Republic, they have demonstrated in blood their right to the ballot, which is but the humane protection of the flag they have so fearlessly defended."

"If all that has been said by orators and poets since the creation of the world in praise of women were applied to the women of America, it would not do them justice."

From Remarks on American Women

Delivered at a "Sanitary Fair" in Washington, March 18, 1864.

"In this extraordinary war, extraordinary developments have manifested themselves, such as have not been seen in former wars; and amongst these manifestations nothing has been more remarkable than these fairs for the relief of suffering soldiers and their families. And the chief agents in these fairs are the women of America.

"I am not accustomed to the use of language of eulogy; I have never studied the art of paying compliments to women; but I must say, that if all that has been said by orators and poets since the creation of the world in praise of women were applied to the women of America, it would not do them justice for their conduct during this war. I will close by saying, God bless the women of America."

"That some should be rich shows that others may become rich, and hence is just encouragement to industry and enterprise."

From Speech Delivered to a Committee of Workingmen's Association of New York, March 21, 1864

"The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations, and tongues, and kindreds. Nor should this lead to a war upon property, or the owners of property. Property is the fruit of labor; property is desirable; is a positive good in the world. That some should be rich shows that others may become rich, and hence is just encouragement to industry and enterprise. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him work diligently and build one for himself, thus by example assuring that his own shall be safe from violence when built."

"Gold is good in its place, but living, brave, patriotic men are better than gold."

From Remarks Made In Response to a Serenade of Citizens, November 10, 1864, When His Re-election Was Assured

"It has demonstrated that a people's government can sustain a national election in the midst of a great civil war. Until now, it has not been known to the world that this was a possibility. It shows, also, how sound and how strong we still are. It shows that, even among candidates of the same party, he who is most devoted to the Union and most opposed to treason can receive most of the people's votes. It shows, also, to the extent not yet known, that we have more men now than we had when the war began. Gold is good in its place, but living, brave, patriotic men are better than gold."

"Unanimity of action . . . is almost indispensable."

From Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1864

"In a great national crisis like ours, unanimity of action among those seeking a common end is very desirable—almost indispensable. And yet no approach to such unanimity is attainable unless some deference shall be paid to the will of the majority, simply because it is the will of the majority. In this case the common end is the maintenance of the Union, and among the means to secure that end, such will, through the election, is most clearly declared in favor of such constitutional amendment."

"With firm reliance on the strength of our free government, the loyalty of the people and with unshaken faith in the Supreme Ruler."

Speech Made to Electoral College Accepting the Office of President, February 9, 1865

"With deep gratitude to my countrymen for this mark of their confidence; with a distrust of my own ability to perform the duty required under the most favorable circumstances, and now rendered doubly difficult by existing national perils; yet with a firm reliance on the strength of our free government, and the eventual loyalty of the people to the just principles upon which it is founded, and above all with an unshaken faith in the Supreme Ruler of Nations, I accept this trust. Be pleased to signify this to the respective Houses of Congress."

"With malice toward none; with charity for all."

From Second Inaugural Address, Washington, D. C., March 4, 1865

"Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan —to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

The last words written by Abraham Lincoln just before leaving for Ford's Theatre, April 14, 1865:

GEORGE ASHMUN

Washington, D. C., April 14, 1865.

"Allow Mr. Ashmun and his friends to come in at 9 a. m. tomorrow."

A. LINCOLN.

Though great, he was ever humble; powerful in his own might, he was the protector of the down-trodden, devout in his thought, just in his deeds, sincere in his every achievement—

such was

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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